CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1262
CD/NTB/WP.120
16 June 1994

Original: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 15 JUNE 1994 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ADDRESSED TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING A STATEMENT MADE ON 13 JUNE 1994 TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON A NUCLEAR TEST BAN

I have the honour to forward to you a statement which I made on 13 June to the Nuclear Test Ban Ad Hoc Committee, concerning a nuclear test carried out by China on 10 June 1994.

Could you please take the appropriate steps to register this statement as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament, and have it distributed to all member delegations and non-member States participating in the work of the Conference.

(Signed) Stephen J. Ledogar
Ambassador

I would like to read out the text of a White House statement, issued in Washington on 10 June:

> "On 10 June, China conducted an underground nuclear test at the Lop Nor test site in Northwest China. The United States deeply regrets this action. We urge China to refrain from further nuclear tests and to join the other nuclear powers in a global moratorium as we work to complete a Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) Treaty at the earliest possible time."

As I informed the Conference on Disarmament this past 17 March, President Clinton, in a report to Congress on 14 March, stated that he was extending the moratorium on nuclear testing by the United States through September 1995. The President's decision was based on fundamental United States national security interests, weighing the contribution further tests would make to improving the safety and reliability of the United States arsenal in preparation for a comprehensive test ban against such factors as: the restraint the other declared nuclear powers have shown in not responding to China's nuclear test of October 1993 with tests of their own; the encouraging progress recorded in the CTB negotiations since they formally opened on 25 January of this year; and the adverse implications further United States nuclear tests would have on our broader non-proliferation objectives, including, most notably, our interest in securing the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty next year.

The President will decide next year whether to extend the moratorium beyond September 1995, taking into account the same factors noted above.

The United States remains firmly committed to achieving, at the earliest possible time, a Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. In fact, all of the nuclear powers - including China - have committed themselves to achieving a CTBT. In this regard, we are very pleased that Russia, France and the United Kingdom have shown continued restraint, despite Chinese testing. We would note that the restraint shown by the other nuclear powers, together with the encouraging progress in the CTBT negotiations here in Geneva and the benefits which we believe the moratorium will have for our broader non-proliferation objectives, all contributed to President Clinton's decision in March to extend the United States moratorium through September 1995.

For these reasons we once again urge China to refrain from further nuclear tests and to join the other nuclear powers in a global moratorium as we work to complete a CTBT at the earliest possible time. This test only serves to emphasize the importance of moving ahead with the negotiations here in Geneva as quickly as possible.